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SEPTEMBER



EXCALIBUR

DRAGON
MILLS
MUSIC



DIRECT EDITION



08911

7 59606 04057 5

NOV 89 \$1.95 US \$2.75 CAN

"I DON'T UNDERSTAND
WHAT WE'RE DOING
BACK IN THIS PUB."

"I TOLD YOU -- THIS PLACE
IS YOUR DRINKING HOLE FOR
SPIES, AND BECAUSE OF
THAT, IT'S TREATED AS
NEUTRAL GROUND."

"SO WE'RE SAFE
HERE. THE CROWN
IS PRACTICALLY A
CHURCH IN INTEL
CIRCLES."

"DRINK YOUR
DRINK, KITTY. WE'VE
JUST BEEN SHOT AT.
YOU'RE BOUND TO
BE A LITTLE SHAKEN
UP AND I'LL
HELP..."

"I DON'T
REALLY WANT
IT."

"BESIDES...
I'VE BEEN AN
X-MAN SINCE I
WAS FOURTEEN,
PETE."

"IT'S LIKE
WEARING A
BIG SIGN SAYING
'PLEASE TRY AND
KILL ME, I
LIKE IT.'"

"NOT MUCH DIFFERENT
FROM WORKING FOR
BLACK AIR -- EXCEPT
I NEVER GOT
USED TO IT."

"HNNK!"

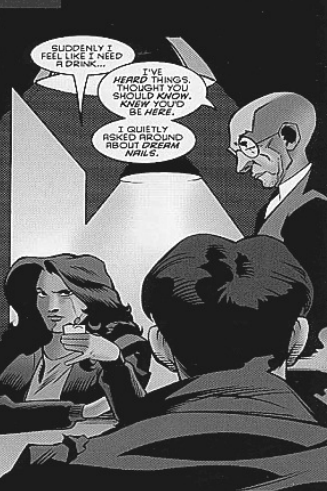
"WOLVERINE
USED TO DRINK
WHISKY LIKE
THAT..."

"COURSE
HE HAD A HEALING
FACTOR. I BET YOU
DON'T EVEN HAVE
INSURANCE..."



HOW DID YOU
KNOW? -- JARDINE!
WHERE'D YOU COME
FROM?

IN
CRIMINAL INTEL,
PETE, WE'RE LIKE THE
SPANISH INQUISITION.
NO ONE EXPECTS
US, HELLO,
KITTY.



SUDDENLY I
FEEL LIKE I NEED
A DRINK...

I'VE
HEARD THINGS.
THOUGHT YOU
SHOULD KNOW.
KNEW YOU'D
BE HERE.

I QUIETLY
ASKED AROUND
ABOUT DREAM
NAILS.



EASY
TIGER?

Oh, BLOODY
MARVELOUS...

IT
EXISTS UNDER
THE FILE COVER
EASY TIGER. A
BLACK AIR ISN'T
FROM TOP TO
BOTTOM.

COME
BACK TO MY
OFFICE. I'VE HEARD
BLACK AIR ISN'T
PLAYING THE GAME
ANYMORE, AND MIGHT
BE BUGGING THE
CROWN.



OLD MUIR ISLAND,
WAY UP NORTH IN
THE FREEZING COLD.

THERE'S A SOUND
LIKE A THOUSAND
HARPS, OUT IN
THE DARK --

-- THE SOUND OF
MAGIC, AND OF
THE ARRIVAL OF
AMANDA SEFTON,
MAGICIENNE.

AMANDA!
THE STATION
SENSOR ARRAY READ
YOUR TELEPORT
SIGNATURE.

Ach, I
DO LIKE THAT
COSTUME; YOU
KNOW...

YOU'RE A
DIRTY OLD
MAN, KURT
WAGNER. LET
ME IN.



SO,
HOW IS EVERY-
BODY?

IN
TRUTH?
LOUSY.

WE WERE
IN GENOSHA,
LOOKING FOR A WAY
TO END THE NEW
FACTIONAL FIGHTING,
AND IT WAS A
BUST.

SINCE
WHEN WAS
EXCALIBUR'S
PROVINCE
POLITICS,
KURT?

WE GOT
SUCKERED INTO
IT BY BRITISH
INTELLIGENCE.

THE
HUMAN GUERILLAS
ARE USING A MUTANT-
PIERCING BULLET
MADE IN
ENGLAND --

-- SUPPOSEDLY
DEVELOPED BY
BRIAN BRADDOCK'S
FATHER, BEFORE HE
DIED.

OH,
GOD. NOW'S
BRIAN TAKING
IT?

DON'T
KNOW. HE WON'T
TALK ABOUT IT.

MOIRA'S
CHIEF AND
I THOUGHT YOU
CARED ABOUT
ME...

NO,
NO -- IT'S
THE LAST OF RORY'S.
SPEAKING OF WHOM,
RORY'S DOING SOME
PSYCHOANALYSIS
ON SPOOR --

IS THAT
WISE?

HOW
DO YOU
MEAN?

Oh,
NOTHING...

GET ON
WITH THAT
COFFEE. I'M
COLD.



AMANDA LEAVES THE HORROR UNSPOKEN, SWORN TO SECRECY BY THE MAN WITHIN WHOM THE HORROR GESTATES.

DOCTOR RORY CAMPBELL HAS SEEN A FUTURE IN WHICH HE TAKES THE NAME ANAB --

-- AND USES HIS SKILL IN PSYCHOLOGY TO TORTURE MUTANTS.

NOBODY KNOWS BUT AMANDA -- AND RORY HIMSELF.

SPOOR, REAL NAME, ANDREW HAMISH GRAVES.



I WOULD'VE THOUGHT GRAVES A GOOD ENOUGH NAME FOR A... "SUPER-VILLAIN, IS IT?"



NO! "MURDERING SLIME," THEN, HOW DOES THAT SUIT YOU?

OF COURSE, YOU NEVER HAD THE GUTS TO MURDER ANYONE YOURSELF -- YOU USED YOUR MOOD-ALTERING MUTANT TALENT TO MAKE THEM KILL THEMSELVES -- OR EACH OTHER!



THAT WON'T HAPPEN HERE. I'M TAKING MOOD-STABILIZERS.



"NICE OFFICES, JARDINE."

"THEY'LL DO. SO, KITTY, YOU TOOK ALL THIS STUFF FROM CULLEY'S FLAT?"

YEAH. THOUGHT THEY MIGHT HOLD A CLUE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM.

LISTEN. IS SOMEONE GOING TO TELL ME WHAT "EASY TIGER" STANDS FOR?

I'M AFRAID I DON'T KNOW. IT'S BLACK AIR NOMENCLATURE.

IT'S A SIMPLE ONE.

EASY TIGER -- E.T. -- EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL.

YOU MEAN TO TELL ME THEY'VE GOT SPACE ALIENS SHACKED UP AT DREAM NAILS?

I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH YOU KNOW ABOUT MY BACKGROUND, MISTER JARDINE...

-- BUT BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY ALIENS EXIST, AND THEY'RE USUALLY HUNGRY.



"THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE -- AND IT'S GOT BLOODY GREAT TEETH."

I'M OFF TO THE LOO.

MISTER JARDINE, THIS IS GOING TO SOUND FUNNY, BUT -- WHY ARE YOU HELPING PETE?

HE DOESN'T SEEM THE TYPE TO INSPIRE LOYALTY, IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.

IF YOU MEAN HE'S A RUDE, UNPLEASANT TOERAG, THEN SAY SO. HE IS.

HE ALSO SAVED MY DAUGHTER'S LIFE IN CHINA FOUR YEARS AGO, AND TOOK THREE BULLETS DOING IT.

AND WHEN I ASKED HIM WHY HE DID THAT FOR A COMPLETE STRANGER -- WHICH SHE WAS -- HE SAID "IT NEEDED DOING."

REMEMBER BIG FAT DOYLE, FROM THE PUB? PETE STOLE A BLACK AIR CHOPPER TO GET HIM TO THE HOSPITAL WHEN HIS APPENDIX RUPTURED.

"NEEDED DOING," HE SAID.



"WE HELP PETE WISDOM
BECAUSE HE'S SPENT
HIS WHOLE LIFE ON HIS
OWN, BUT HOWEVER
MUCH HE LIKES TO
COVER IT UP --"

"-- HE CARES
ABOUT PEOPLE."

ALL RIGHT,
YOU CAN
STOP TALKING
ABOUT ME
NOW.

YOU
THINK WE DON'T HAVE
BETTER THINGS TO TALK
ABOUT THAN YOU, WISDOM?



LISTEN,
I'VE HAD A
BIT OF AN
IDEA.

HOPE
IT'S BETTER THAN
CULLEY'S IDEAS. SEEMS
TO HAVE SPENT HIS LAST
DAYS SCRIBBLING
ABOUT "SPACE
ANTIGODS"...

NOT
REALLY.

THE
ONLY WAY I'M
GOING TO FIND OUT
HOW CULLEY DIED,
AND MAKE BLACK AIR
DO SOMETHING
ABOUT IT --

-- IS
IF I BREAK
IN TO DREAM
NAILS.

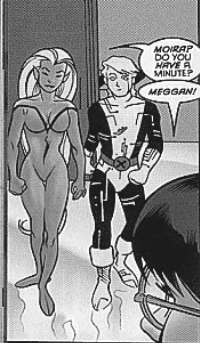
**QUIR ISLAND:
THE MEDILAB.**

MOIRA MACTAGGERT, MEDICAL SCIENTIST, THE ONLY HUMAN IN THE WORLD INFECTED WITH THE MUTANT-KILLING LEGACY-VIRUS IS PICKING SCABS. EMOTIONAL SCABS.

EXPERIENCING THE FASCINATING PAIN OF LOOKING AT ALL THE PEOPLE THE VIRUS HAS ALREADY KILLED.

SHE COULD TURN OFF THE DISPLAY AT ANY TIME, AND STOP HURTING HERSELF.

BUT SHE WON'T. PICKING SCABS IS STRANGELY SATISFYING.



MOIRAP
DO YOU
HAVE A
MINUTE?

MEGGAN!



Och,
IS THAT WEE
DOUGLOCK WITH
YEP C'MON
IN...

<sniff>
SO WHAT
CAN I DO F'R
YE BOTH?

WELL,
DOUGLOCK'S
BEEN HELPING WITH
MY LESSONS, 'COS
KITTY'S AWAY, AND
WE GOT TO
TALKING.

MEGGAN'S
READING IS NOW
AVERAGE FOR HER AGE AND
SPECIES. WE WERE READING
A LEGACY VIRUS DOCUMENT.



WE, um,
SAW KURT, TOO,
WHO SAID YOU WERE
LOOKING FOR A PATTERN
TO THE LEGACY VIRUS
INFECTIONS.

AND,
WELL, SINCE MY
POWERS BECAME TIED
DIRECTLY INTO NATURE,
I'VE BEEN SENSITIVE
TO PATTERNS,
CYCLES...



Oh,
AYEP?

AND, AS
MY OWN TECHNO-
ORGANIC NATURE LEADS
ME TO PERCEIVE LIFE IN TERMS
OF LOGIC SYSTEMS, WE
REVIEWED THE AVAILABLE
DATA.



THERE
IS NO PATTERN,
MOIRAP.

THERE'S
NO REASON WHY
THE VIRUS INFECTED
YOU OR ANYONE
ELSE.

ISN'T THAT...
UNNATURAL?

THERE IT IS, RIGHT WHERE
JARDINE SAID IT WOULD BE.
R.A.F. UTTERLEIGH -- CODE-
NAMED DREAM NAILS. I'LL
PUT US DOWN IN THE FOREST.

Put me down. I agreed to
let you fly me here in the
Midnight Runner. I did
not agree to you going in
with me.

BRIAN'S
STEALTH SYSTEM'S
RUNNING WELL...

I COULDN'T
GIVE A MONKEYS
ABOUT HIS BLOODY
SYSTEMS! I AM GOING
INTO THAT BASE
ALONE!

THE
JOB NEEDS
DOING, AND I'M
BLOODY DOING
IT.

DON'T YOU
THINK IT'S TIME
YOU STOPPED DOING
EVERYTHING
ALONE?

SPEND THE
REST OF YOUR
LIFE GETTING SHOT
AND BEING HORRIBLE TO
PEOPLE AND BEING
ALONE IF YOU
LIKE --

-- BUT
SOME OF US
CAN SEE THROUGH
YOU AND CARING
ABOUT PEOPLE IS A
TWO-WAY THING,
AND --



-- AND --
AND --
-- little --

ANYWAY,
I'M IN MY COSTUME
NOW. WE'RE BREAKING
INTO DREAM NAILS
TOGETHER.

AM I GOING MAD? HE'S
PRETTY. HE'S MOODY. HE'S
PROBABLY TEN YEARS
OLDER THAN ME --

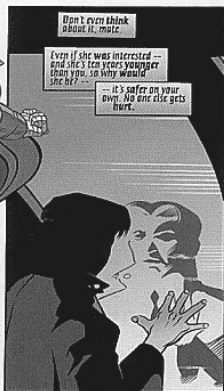
-- AND I NEVER
SETTLED THINGS
WITH COLOSSUS --
AND HIS NAME'S
PETER, TOO, WHICH
IS JUST A SIGN OF
TROUBLE --

-- AND I NERVILY
TOLD HIM... GOD,
I WISH I HAD
ORDERED TO TALK
TO, OR RACHEL...

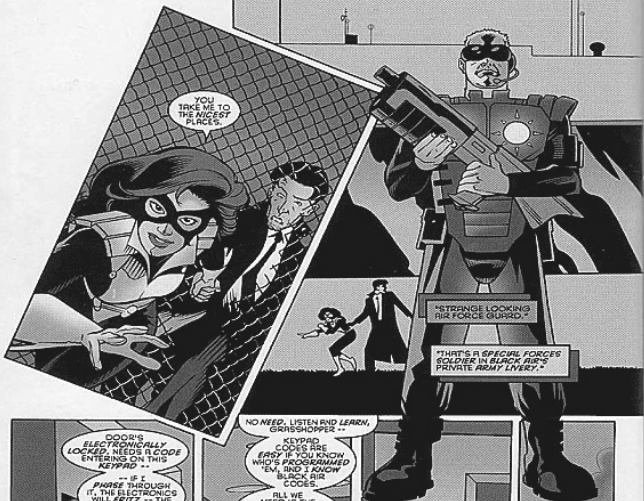
Don't even think
about it, mate.

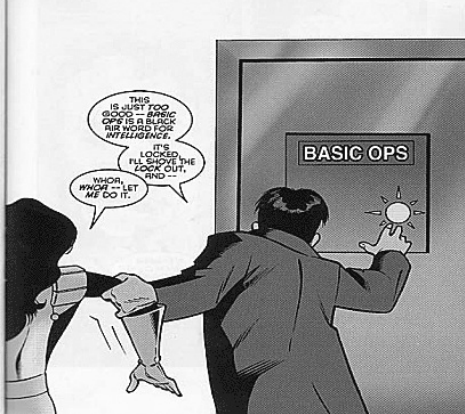
Even if she was interested --
and she's ten years younger
than you, so why would
she be?

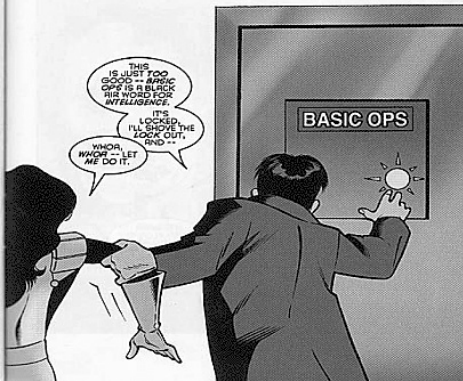
-- it's safer on your
own. No one else gets
hurt.

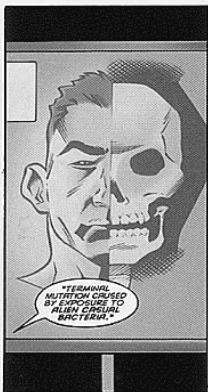
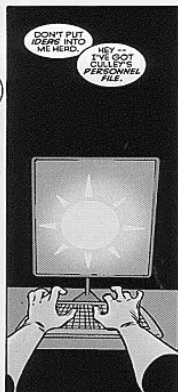




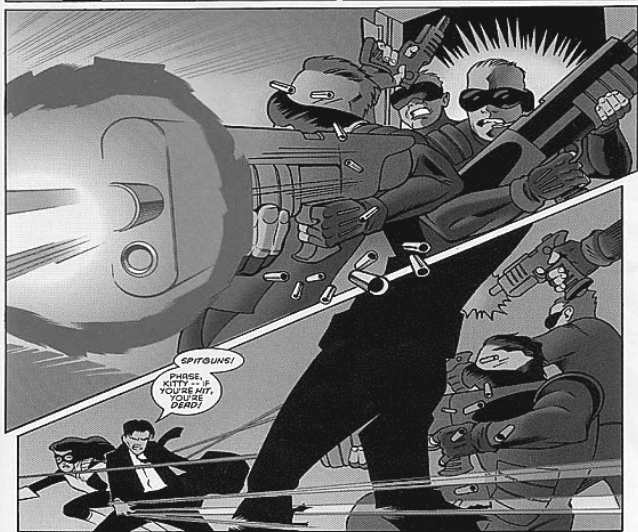
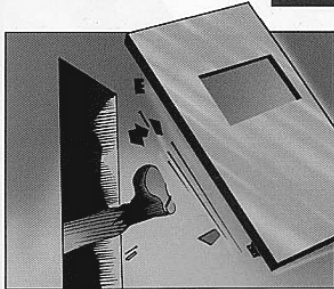




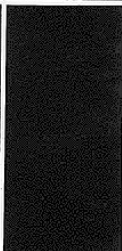












STORYBOOKS

NEXT ISSUE! DON'T MISS BLOOD EAGLE, OUR DOUBLE-SIZED NO-HOLDS-BARRED CLIMATIC TALE WHERE PETE AND KITTY TAKE ON BLACK AIR AND THE UNCREATED--AND RORY DOES BATTLE WITH HIS GREATEST FOE--THE ENEMY WITHIN!



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⊗
If you don't want your full name and address printed, be sure to tell us!

**SUZANNE GAFFNEY
EDITOR**

**BOB HARRAS
CHIEF**

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Dear X-Mates,

How do I begin? The news was such a shock that for several days I was at a loss for words. My mind simply couldn't comprehend the need for such radical change. In one fell swoop, the whole history of my favorite mutants would be rewritten. I couldn't believe this was going to happen. I read the notice in my comic shop several times to make sure I wasn't seeing things.

Why? What can you possibly hope to gain by this? You will murder the man (Oliver) and you will let his dream, and the living symbols of that dream will be changed forever.

Are you so willing to invalidate everything that has happened to the X-Men over the past thirty years? These mutants are some of my favorite characters. They are some of the best Marvel has to offer, in my opinion. And they are always among your top ten best sellers. I have all nine titles including the new GENERATION X.

I think you should really consider what is going on in your readers' minds right now. Is this new mutant order permanent, or are you leading up to something else?

I could go on and on about this, or about what it all means. The X-stories are in a class by themselves. They survived the departure of Claremont, Byrne, and a slew of artists—I shall refrain from naming that company—but in all honesty, will the fans let it survive something like this? What are we supposed to think? I have never written to a comic before (how many times have you guys heard that one), but I felt I had to write it, needed to. I don't want you to change everything that I've come to know and love in the X-books. And I don't think I'm alone.

George Morton III
(Address withheld by request)

First, let us say, George, that we loved your letter and the other letters we received expressing similar reservations. We editors of the X are the luckiest folks in the world because there are fans like you out there ready to keep us on our toes and remind us (should we ever forget, which is not likely) how much these characters mean to you... and to us! Hope you've forgiven us for causing you such worry... but we hope you kinda liked the result!

Thank you, also, for the kudos on our past accomplishments. As we often remind ourselves, we may not know the recipe for success, but we do know that resting on our laurels is surely the road to failure!

Let us know how we did!

Glenn Tag Sword Strikes,

(Love the name!) I couldn't believe it when I saw the bullet to start writing. It was X-CALIBUR that compelled me to write.

At first, I was upset when my favorite fuzzy-elf teleported someone's finger off. After reading three issues each of X-Calibre, Amazing, Astonishing, Weapon X and Generation Next, I've realized that this is the worst these X-Men have in (and it's a doozy). I was, however, still a bit squeamish when Nightbe teleported the head of Dead Man Wade (the comic, ouch!).

So far, X-CALIBUR #2 is my favorite comic out of all the Apocalypses I've read. Ever since I learned what Mystique did to Kurt

as a helpless baby to save herself, I've had the urge to slap her. But Mystique has always been a complex character. I found it refreshing how protective she was about her son. Mystique has shown that when she loves someone, she will stand by them, as she has shown with Rogue and Destiny in the Xavier lineages.

I don't know what you have in store for this mother and son relationship when the Xavier timeline is put back in motion, but, if Raven and Kurt forget this relationship, I'd be deeply saddened. Now you silly people will get me hooked on Excalibur (I don't normally buy it) to see if anything happens between my favorite fuzzy-elf and my now favorite shade-shifter.

Also, as far as Mystique goes, love the costume! It's a big improvement—and nice gun!

Like Nightbe said, "But you should really ask my mom if I can come out to play." With lines like these, make mine X-CALIBUR...
Um, EXCALIBUR too!

Angela Hassenstein
(Address withheld by request)

At the moment, Angela, odds are against Nightcrawler remembering his antics with his mommy dearest. (Of the X-Men only Bishop has the barest clue as to what happened) but that doesn't mean we haven't got plans for the two of them in this issue. It's a small world, after all, especially how close the two of them are with X-Factor (and if you didn't know that—go out and reserve your copy—NOW!).

Dear Suzanne,

After reading X-CALIBUR #3, I think I can now safely say this series is the biggest surprise of all the books involved in the Age of Apocalypse storyline. With extremely enjoyable artwork, both visually exciting and appealing, and a very well thought out story, this series has proven to be one of the most enjoyable of the half a dozen or so related books, reaching far above my highest expectations.

What I especially found to be very interesting was the focus on the relationship between Kurt and Mystique, many because I've felt this relationship in particular has always been somewhat neglected in the past. Both characters already are very complex and intriguing individually, but somehow, when the two get together, the synergy is always there, making the sum bigger than the parts. Thus, it's very pleasing to see that two characters play such a pivotal role in this book, against an interesting background, with enough nice supporting characters and enough continuity to the bigger, overall plotline as well. My compliments to writer Warren Ellis on this superb job.

Well, with only one issue to go of this series during the After Xavier saga, I'm sure you guys will really wrap things up next issue, prepping the regular cast of characters for the revival of the timeline as all have come to know and love. Of course, I do hope the characters involved in the alternative timeline story keep their memories about it. For if nobody remembers anything anymore, the whole saga will have been rather pointless, I fear.

Anyways, good job, and make sure to keep it up for a while, okay?

Olvy Bremor
The Netherlands

Fear not, Olav. As you probably know by now if you've checked out X-THIN PRIN or any of the other X-family titles, the good news is that the X-Men's heroic effort to set things back to the way they were was highly successful. The bad news is that our heroes unfortunately brought back a few "unmemorable" from the Age of Apocalypse... who have no intention of being forgotten!

Dear Sword Strikes,

Having been a reader of Excalibur since issue one, I have seen many changes in each of the main characters' lives as well as many alternate versions of Excalibur during the Cross Time Caper. But, I must say, in your current X-Calibre Series you have outdone yourself, for besides the fact that the in-depth storyline is surpassing all those done before, putting to rest the rumors that the act of storytelling isn't the focus of Marvel comics.

As you can guess, I am focusing on your well structured rebirth of Nightcrawler. In the past, we have seen parented versions of the "fuzzy elf" we know and love, most profoundly, the Nightcrawler of Lightning Force, and we have also gone through the torment Kurt faces, most recently the loss of Corsie so quickly, and as unnaturally as possible. We're missing this comparison to what you have undertaken in your recent issues.

First, let me say that I hope the old Kurt will return, but I love what you have done in exploring possible recitations, for not only have you charmed Kurt "Darthma" to look on life, but his entire mind as well. No longer do we have the jovial muckster who sees a battle with an enemy as a chance to try his swashbuckling skills, but the new darker Kurt who decides to finish his arguments as quickly, and as ruthlessly as possible. No longer do we have a Kurt devoted to his faith and Xavier's dream, wondering what his mother thinks of him. Now there is a Kurt who believes in nothing but his own survival, following Magneto's wishes and looking for his loving mother. Even his powers of darkness have advanced, hiding in the shadows till he can strike with surprise.

All this means one thing: Nightcrawler has a new attitude, one devoid of emotion and self-doubt, and despite all the changes, is still the lovable fighter and leader we all love.

Once again, I must congratulate you all on an outstanding issue, and keep up the excellent work. (Just make sure our Mr. Wagner returns in four months!)

Jason Stewart
P.O. Box 270
Bryantown, MD 20617

Wow, Jason! Thanks for sticking with us from the beginning, and for enjoying the fruits of our creative efforts.

Kurt Wagner, as you probably know, has definitely returned but as we indicated to Angela, we wouldn't be surprised if he doesn't feel a certain inexplicable need to reach out via the comm-link and give mother Mystique a call.